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**THE SHORT-TERM BEHAVIORAL REACTIONS OF  
BOTTLENOSE DOLPHINS TO INTERACTIONS WITH  
BOATS IN DOUBTFUL SOUND, NEW ZEALAND**

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Doubtful Sound is home to one of the southernmost resident populations of bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops* sp.). This population regularly interacts with scenic cruises. During these interactions, dolphins tend to horizontally and vertically avoid vessels, especially when the behavior of these vessels is intrusive. This study aimed at understanding the behavioral reactions of individuals to these interactions that lead to the disruption of the school's behavioral state. Observing the behavioral events performed by individuals during an interaction can help define the short-term reactions elicited by the boat presence. I recorded the behavioral events performed by all individuals of focal schools. The frequency of occurrence of all events was compared depending on the presence of vessels, their behavior, and the behavioral state of the focal school. Dolphins tended to perform more side flops while interacting with powerboats, a behavior which may be used as a non-vocal communication tool. Moreover, the movement of dolphins became more erratic during interactions with all types of vessels. These effects increased when the boats were more intrusive while interacting. This study shows that the impact of interaction with boats can be minimized if the vessels respect the guidelines in place.